

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1) A method of real-time communication between a plurality of users each with respective communication devices having associated displays, the method comprising:
 - (a) providing each of the plurality of users with collaboration initiation software at their communication devices;
 - (b) allowing at least first and second users to connect to at least one communication network by logging in at their respective communication devices;
 - (c) maintaining service records for at least the first and second logged in users, the service records including user identification information and an associated location where each user is logged in no matter where they are located;
 - (d) causing display of a user identifier for at least the second user on the display of at least a first user's communication device;
 - (e) allowing the user to select the displayed second user's identifier;
 - (f) retrieving necessary addressing information of the second user; and
 - (g) establishing a connection between the first and second users, thereby enabling real-time communication displayed on the display of the first and second users.
- 2) The method of claim 1, wherein the communication includes real-time text messages displayed on the displays associated with the first and second users.
- 3) The method of claim 2, wherein at least one communication device is a wireless device.
- 4) The method of claim 2, wherein the communication network is a wide area network.
- 5) The method of claim 1, wherein the user identifier is in a personalized list.
- 6) The method of claim 5, wherein at least one identifier is a graphical icons representing a user.
- 7) The method of claim 6, further comprising indicating to a user whether another user is not logged in.
- 8) The method of claim 2, further comprising allowing the first user to:
 - (a) select a new user from among a plurality of potential users; and

- (b) add that new user to an existing communication.

9) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

- (a) detecting an attempt by a third user to initiate a communication with the first user;
- (b) notifying the first user of the attempt; and
- (c) allowing the first user to establish a communication with the third user.

10) The method of claim 9, wherein the attempt to initiate communications appears automatically on a user's display.

11) The method of claim 2, further comprising

- (a) allowing the first user to send an e-mail to the second user.

12) The method of claim 2, wherein the communication includes at least one picture image.

13) The method of claim 12, wherein the communications include video images of at least one user.

14) A method of real-time communication between a plurality of users each with respective communication devices having associated displays, the method comprising:

- (a) providing each of the plurality of users with collaboration initiation software at their communication devices;
- (b) allowing at least first and second users to connect to at least one communication network by logging in at their respective communication devices;
- (c) maintaining service records for at least the first and second logged in users, the service records including user identification information and an associated location where each user is logged in;
- (d) causing display of a user identifier for at least the second user in a personalized list on the display of at least a first user's communication device;
- (e) allowing the first user to select the displayed second user's identifier;
- (f) retrieving necessary addressing information of the second user; and

- (g) establishing a connection between the first and second users, thereby enabling real-time communication displayed on the display of the first and second users.
- 15) The method of claim 14, wherein the personalized list includes at least one graphical icon representing a user.
- 16) The method of claim 14, further comprising indicating to a user whether another user is not logged in.
- 17) The method of claim 16, wherein the service records further include a location where each user is logged in no matter where they are located.
- 18) The method of claim 16, wherein the communication includes real-time text messages displayed on the displays associated with the first and second users.
- 19) The method of claim 18, wherein at least one communication device is a wireless device.
- 20) The method of claim 19, wherein the communication network is a wide area network.
- 21) The method of claim 18, further comprising allowing the first user to:
 - (a) select a new user from among a plurality of potential users; and
 - (b) add that new user to an existing communication.
- 22) The method of claim 18, further comprising:
 - (a) detecting an attempt by a third user to initiate a communication with the first user;
 - (b) notifying the first user of the attempt; and
 - (c) allowing the first user to establish a communication with the third user.
- 23) The method of claim 16, wherein selecting a user is done by clicking on an icon.
- 24) The method of claim 16, wherein users can indicate they want to accept incoming communications.
- 25) The method of claim 22, wherein the attempt to initiate communications appears automatically on a user's display.
- 26) The method of claim 16, further comprising
 - (a) allowing the first user to send an e-mail to the second user.

- 27) The method of claim 16, wherein the communication includes at least one picture image.
- 28) The method of claim 17, wherein the communications include video images of at least one user.
- 29) A method of real-time communication between a plurality of users each with respective communication devices having associated displays, the method comprising:
 - (a) providing each of the plurality of users with collaboration initiation software at their communication devices at least one of which is a wireless device;
 - (b) allowing at least first and second users to connect to at least one communication network by logging in at their respective communication devices;
 - (c) maintaining service records for at least the first and second logged in users, the service records including user identification information and an associated location where each user is logged in no matter where they are located;
 - (d) causing display of a user identifier in a personalized list for at least the second user on the display of at least a first user's communication device;
 - (e) allowing the first user to select the displayed second user's identifier;
 - (f) retrieving necessary addressing information of the second user; and
 - (g) establishing a connection between the first and second users, thereby enabling real-time communication displayed on the display of the first and second users.
- 30) The method of claim 29, wherein the communication includes real-time text messages displayed on the displays associated with the first and second users.
- 31) The method of claim 30, wherein the personalized list includes graphical representations of users and is scrollable.
- 32) The method of claim 31, further comprising indicating to a user whether another user is not logged in.
- 33) The method of claim 32, further comprising allowing the first user to:
 - (a) select a new user from among a plurality of potential users; and
 - (b) add that new user to an existing communication.

- 34) The method of claim 30, further comprising:
 - (a) detecting an attempt by a third user to initiate a communication with the first user;
 - (b) notifying the first user of the attempt; and
 - (c) allowing the first user to establish a communication with the third user.
- 35) The method of claim 34, wherein the attempt to initiate communications appears automatically on a user's display.
- 36) The method of claim 30, wherein the communications include video images of at least one user.